

Message Text

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TAGS: EAID, UNDP, AR

SUBJ: CERP 0008 - EVALUATION OF UN ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

REF: STATE 42239

GENERAL: IN COMMENTING ON THE UNDP PROGRAM, ACCOUNT MUST BE TAKEN OF OVERALL SITUATION IN ARGENTINA DURING PRE AND POST ELECTION YEARS OF 1972-73. UNDER FOUR DIFFERENT PRESIDENTS, THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS WAS GREATLY RETARDED, POSITIONS WERE LEFT UNCOVERED, OFFICIALS WERE CHANGED WITH GREAT FREQUENCY. PARTICULARLY DURING THE CAMPORA PERIOD, OFFICIALS MANIFESTED DEEP SUSPICION OF BILATERAL AS WELL AS MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS-- INCLUDING THOSE OF THE UN--AS BEING "IMPERIALIST" INSTRUMENTS. FURTHERMORE, ARGENTINE NATIONALISM WAS EXACERBATED WITH STRESS PLACED ON ARGENTINE SOLUTIONS TO WHAT WERE VIEWED AS ARGENTINE

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PROBLEMS.

A. ROLE OF UNDP IN UN DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM. THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE CONTINUED TO DEVOTE MOST OF HIS TIME TO RELATIONSHIPS WITH HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN THE FIRST OFFICIAL OF AMBASSADORIAL RANK TO HAVE MET WITH PERON FOLLOWING HIS ELECTION. PREVIOUSLY, HE HAD HAD A VERY EARLY MEETING WITH CAMPORA. STAFF SOURCES INDICATE HIS EFFORTS TO LIMIT ACCESS TO MINISTERIAL AND VICE MINISTERIAL LEVEL OFFICIALS TO HIMSELF AS A DEFINITE HANDICAP, PARTICULARLY SINCE HIS CONTACTS ARE VIEWED AS FOCUSING ON BUILDING UP HIS OWN IMAGE. THE RESIDENT REP DOES NOT GIVE THE IMPRESSION OF BEING PARTICULARLY WELL INFORMED ABOUT THE SPECIFICS OF EVEN MAJOR COMPONENTS OF HIS PROGRAM OR OF HAVING MUCH CONTACT WITH OPERATIONS, PARTICULARLY AT THE FIELD LEVEL. HIS DEPUTY IS REGARDED AS BEING MORE ACCESSIBLE AND OF HAVING A BETTER GRASP ON WHAT IS TAKING PLACE. THERE IS OPEN STAFF CRITICISM OF THE RESIDENT REP'S EXECUTIVE CAPABILITY WITH LITTLE EVIDENCE THAT HE HAS DEVELOPED AN EFFECTIVE TEAM EFFORT. CONCERNING UNDP AND IBRD COORDINATION, SINCE THE LATTER HAS CONCENTRATED ON HIGHWAY/RAIL-ROAD DEVELOPMENT PLUS ITS LOAN FOR PASTURE/CATTLE IMPROVEMENT, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE PRESENT NEED FOR JOINT PROGRAMMING. IN THE CASE OF THE IDB, WHICH HAS A FAR MORE DIVERSE PORTFOLIO, COORDINATION TAKES PLACE AT THE PROJECT LEVEL WITH LITTLE EVIDENCE OF EXCHANGE AS REGARDS APPROACHES TO COUNTRY PRIORITIES, DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES, ETC. UNICEF PRESENTLY HAS NO ONGOING ACTIVITIES.

B. THE COORDINATION OF ALL EXTERNAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE. THE WEAK GOA COORDINATION PROCESS UNDER THE MILITARY GOVERNMENTS WAS FURTHER STRAINED AFTER THE ELECTIONS. THE COORDINATION FUNCTION HAS NOW BEEN GIVEN TO (A) THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE OF THE NATIONAL DIRECTORATE OF FOREIGN POLICY WHICH IN TURN IS A DEPENDENCY OF THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT OF ECONOMIC PLANNING AND COORDINATION OF THE MIN OF ECONOMY; (B) SUBSECRETARY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY OF THE MIN OF CULTURE AND EDUCATION. THIS CHANGE WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY DECREE NO 1450 OF SEPT 28, 1973 WHEN THE SECRETARIAT OF STATE OF PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENTAL ACTION AS WELL AS THE SUBSECRETARIAT OF DEVELOPMENT (FORMERLY CONADE) WERE DISSOLVED WITH VARIOUS SUBUNITS BEING INCORPORATED INTO NEWLY STRUCTURED MINISTRIES. DESPITE THESE CHANGES MANY OF THE PROFESSIONALS NOW WORK IN THE ABOVE MENTIONED DEPARTMENTS SO THAT CONSIDERABLE CONTINUITY IN TERMS OF RELATIONS WITH MULTILATERAL AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BILATERAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HAS BEEN MAINTAINED.

IT IS NOT CONSIDERED LIKELY THAT THE PERONIST GOVERNMENT'S APPROACH TO EXTERNAL TA COORDINATION WILL DIFFER IN ANY MAJOR DEGREE FROM THAT OF PRIOR GOVERNMENTS. CERTAINLY IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE UN RESIDENT REP WILL BE GIVEN THE SENIOR ROLE AND MUCH LESS VIEWED AS A "COORDINATOR" OF THE VARIOUS TA DOLLAR PROGRAMS--UN, OAS, ETC. SINCE HE IS WEAK ON THE SUBSTANTIVE SIDE AND TENDS TO AVOID

OPERATIONAL LEVEL CONTACTS, HE IS NOT IN A POSITION TO EXERCISE MUCH INFLUENCE IN THE COORDINATION PROCESS.

C. COUNTRY PROGRAM REVIEWS. THE UN IS PREPARING FOR ITS FIRST ANNUAL REVIEW WITH THE GOVERNMENT SOMETIME IN APRIL OR MAY. THERE IS LITTLE PRECEDENT ON WHICH TO JUDGE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUCH REVIEWS IN ARGENTINA. IF ANY MAJOR CHANGES ARE TO BE BROUGHT ABOUT IN THE UN OPERATIONS AND EMPHASIS, THEY SHOULD OCCUR AT THIS TIME. UN STAFF VIEW THIS AS A REAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDING THE RESIDENT REP ACTIVELY SEEKS THEIR PARTICIPATION.

D. APPRAISAL OF PROPOSED PROJECTS. THE MISSION HAS MAINTAINED REGULAR LIAISON WITH THE UNDP RESIDENT REP. HOWEVER SINCE FREQUENT GOVERNMENTAL CHANGES AND REORGANIZATIONS PRECLUDED THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY MAJOR NEW PROGRAM PROPOSALS, THE NEED FOR SUCH CONTACTS ON THESE ASPECTS WAS MINIMAL.

3. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION. LIKE MOST BILATERAL OR MULTILATERAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, UN PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS COVERS A BROAD SPECTRUM. TWO AREAS OF APPARENT WEAKNESS ARE THE NEARLY TERMINATED UNESCO EFFORT IN EDUCATION AND AT LEAST CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE UNIDO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. WHILE THE LATTER HAS HAD SOME SUCCESSES, IT HAS SUFFERED FROM A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE PERSONNEL PROBLEMS AS WELL AS IMPLEMENTATION DIFFICULTIES IN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF INDUSTRIAL PARKS. UNDOUBTEDLY, SOME OF THESE DIFFICULTIES RELATE TO THE UNSETTLED CONDITIONS IN ARGENTINA DURING THIS PERIOD WHICH AffECTED THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS, PARTICULARLY AS IT RELATES TO INDUSTRY, BUT LEADERSHIP AT BOTH UN AND UNIDO LEVEL IS FREQUENTLY CRITICIZED. THE GROUP OF PROJECTS CARRIED OUT BY FAO PROBABLY HAVE MADE AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE REAL CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE RESOLUTION OF CERTAIN PROBLEMS AFFECTING ARGENTINE AGRICULTURE. COMMENTS FOLLOW ON A NUMBER OF EXAMPLES:

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(1) THE SOIL CONSERVATION PROJECT HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT IN CORDOBA AND ENTRE RIOS PROVINCES--A SITUATION WHICH RESULTED IN PROBLEMS OF COORDINATION. IN ANY CASE THE PROJECT HAS BEEN A FACTO IN ALERTING GOA OFFICIALS TO THE EXTREMELY SERIOUS EROSION PROBLEMS FACING ARGENTINA. IF THINGS GO AS PLANNED, A PERMANENT SOIL CONSERVATION OFFICE IS TO BE ESTABLISHED UTILIZING PERSONNEL TRAINED UNDER THE PROJECT. (2) THE FORESTRY DEVELOPMENT OF THE NORTHWEST HAS

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ACHIEVED SOME OF ITS OBJECTIVE INCLUDING A RESOURCE SURVEY AND PROPOSALS RE MODERN METHODS OF LUMBER EXPLOITATION AND USE. GOA AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS SECTOR SUPPORT THE PROJECT AND VIEW IT AS VALUABLE. (3) THE ANIMAL PRODUCTION (BALCARCE-ANGUIL) PROJECT IN CONJUNCTION WITH IBRD HAS ALREADY BEGUN TO MAKE AN IMPACT ON PASTURE HANDLING AND SHOWS POTENTIAL RE INCREASING BEEF PRODUCTION PER LAND UNIT. THE QUALITY OF EXPERTS HAS BEEN NOTABLY HIGH AND IN GENRAL THEY VIEW THEIR EFFORTS AS BEING WELL RECEIVED AND UTILIZED. THE INTA STATION AT BALCARCE HAS BEEN RELATIVELY FREE OF THE PROBLMES AFFECTING INTA SO THAT OPERATIONS CONTINUE VIRTUALLY NORMALLY. (4) THE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT PROJECT REACHED SOME OF ITS OBJECTIVES, PARTICULARLY AS REGARDS TRAINING AND PROMOTING THE USE OF MODERN EQUIPMENT. THE FISH RESOURCE SURVEY PORTION WAS INADEQUATE WITH OPERATIONS DELAYED BY PROBLEMS IN GETTING THE REQUIRED SHIPS. THE NEXT PHASES WILL COVER PATAGONIA'S FISH RESOURCES. THIS PROJECT IS SAID TO BE A REAL ELEMENT IN PROVIDING

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ARGENTINA WITH THE ABILITY TO BENEFIT FROM FISHERY RESOURCES IN WATERS IT CONSIDERS WITHIN ITS JURISDICTION. (5) THE ALFALFA PRODUC-

TION PROJECT SEEKS TO ARREST THE SERIOUS PROBLEM CAUSED BY THE DECLINE IN ALFALFA PRODUCTIVITY. SINCE INTA HAS SUFFERED SEVERELY FROM RADICALIZED LEADERSHIP CHARACTERIZED BY OVERTLY ANTI-AMERICAN ATTITUDES, IT IS CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT THAT FAO ASSISTANCE IF BEING PROVIDED BY TOP US SPECIALIST, WITH RESERACH AND FIELD WORK SAID TO BE PROGRESSING QUITE WELL. THE FACT THAT OPERATIONS ON THESE PROJECTS AT LEAST CONTINUED FAIRLY NORMALLY UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES INDICATES THE CONTINUING PRIORITY PLACED UPON THEM BY ARGENTINE AUTHORITIES. SHORTCOMINGS IN HOST COUNTRY CONTRIBUTIONS HAVE CAUSED DELAYS BUT IN GENERAL ARE NOT REGARDED BY UN OFFICIALS AS BEING OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANE. IN THE CASE OF INTA THE ELIMINATION OF A MAJORITY OF THE MOST SENIOR OFFICIALS CERTAINLY AFFECTED DECISION MAKING AND THUS FIELD OPERATIONS.

F. PROJECT EVALUATION. CONCERNING PROJECT EVALUATION, THE TRIPARTITE REVIEW SYSTEM HAS HAD LITTLE APPLICATION TO DATE BUT IS CURRENTLY BEING APPLIED TO THE FISHERY PROJECT. IN ANY CASE UNLESS THE GOA AGENCY INVOLVED HAS AN EFFECTIVE INTERNAL MECHANISM-- WHICH IN MOST CASES IS NOT THE CASE--THE PROCESS COULD BE RELATIVELY OF LITTLE UTILITY. THE RESIDENT REP'S ANNUAL REPORT FOR THIS YEAR IS NOT YET AVAILABLE, AND PROBABLY WILL NOT BE TOO MUCH DIFFERNET FROM LAST YEARS DUE TO THE SLOW PACE OF DEVELOPMENT OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS. A GENERAL COMMENT ON THE FORMAT OF THE REPORT IS THAT IT IS FAR TOO LONG, FILLED WITH DATA ON COMPLETED PROJECTS, AND DOES NOT BRING OUT WHAT PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARDS PROJECT OBJECTIVES. SINCE THIS REPORT HAS WIDE CIRCULATION, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THE RESIDENT REP IS NOT GOING TO PRESENT A CRITICAL OR PERHAPS EVEN OBJECTIVE VIEW OF OPERATIONS.

AS NOTED LAST YEAR, THE MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE GETTING ANY EVALUATION REPORTS OBTAINABLE REGARDING UN/ARGENTINE PROJECTS.

G. FOLLOW-UP WITH UNDP AND EVALUATIN AGENCIES. NO COMMENTS.

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